

REMARKS

Claims 1-12 are pending in the present applications. Claims 3, 7, and 10-12 are amended to correct minor inadvertent errors.

In the Office Action, Applicants are asked to elect a single disclosed species from among:

Embodiment 1, FIG. 2a;

Embodiment 2, FIGS. 2b and 2c; and

Embodiment 3, FIG. 2d.

In response to the election of species requirement, Applicants hereby elect with traverse Embodiment 2, FIGS. 2b and 2c for initial prosecution on the merits. Claims 1-9, 11, and 12 are readable on the elected species. At least claims 1 and 2 are generic.

Applicants traverse the election of species requirement on the grounds that the three disclosed embodiments are closely related and that it would not be unduly burdensome for the Examiner to examine all three in a single application. Withdrawal of the election of species requirement is, therefore, respectfully requested.

An early, favorable action on the merits is earnestly solicited.

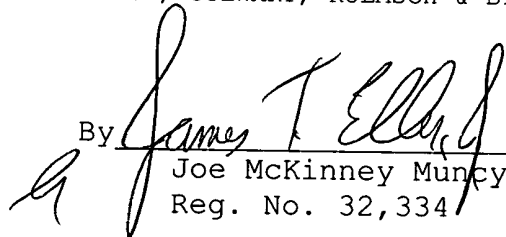
Should any issues arise that can be expedited by a telephone conference, the Examiner is invited to telephone Ken Muncy at (703) 205-8000.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to debit Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fee required under 37 C.F.R. \$1.16 or \$1.17, particularly extension of time fees, or to credit said Deposit Account for any overpayment of fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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By

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